

Indian Health Service  
HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**MODERNIZATION PROGRAM**

**2024 Tribal Consultation and  
Urban Confer Recap Report**



# 2024 Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer Recap Report Health Information Technology Modernization Program

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# 2024 Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer Recap Report Health Information Technology Modernization Program

## TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND URBAN CONFER PURPOSE

A tribal consultation is a government-to-government process that recognizes the inherent and sovereign power of Tribes to exercise their political and legal rights. The consultation process between Tribes and federal agencies allows for meaningful and timely input by tribal officials in the development of policies and initiatives that affect American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals. Tribal consultations are strengthened and affirmed by the federal government in Executive Order 13175.

An urban confer allows the Indian Health Service (IHS) to engage in an open and free exchange of information and opinions with urban Indian organizations (UIO). The IHS facilitates these confer sessions to foster a mutual understanding and comprehension between the federal government and urban leaders and representatives.

The tribal consultation and urban confer (TC/UC) process promotes a collective discussion between the IHS, Tribes, tribal organizations, and UIOs. These sessions enable broad information sharing and emphasize a shared responsibility for the improvement of health care outcomes for AI/AN individuals.

## 2024 TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND URBAN CONFER SESSIONS

The Health Information Technology (IT) Modernization Program facilitated four TC/UC sessions in 2024 to continue building a collaborative partnership with tribal and urban Indian organization (T/UIO) partners. In 2024, the IHS featured three virtual sessions hosted via Zoom and one hybrid session hosted in-person at IHS Headquarters in Rockville, MD and virtually via Zoom. These quarterly sessions allow T/UIO partners to receive key information about various aspects of the Program, with an emphasis on topics that contextualize the technical and people-focused considerations crucial for a successful deployment.

Each session began with an Opening in a Good Way provided by a tribal partner, followed by an overview of Program updates led by a member of the Program leadership team. These Program updates are critical in promoting a shared understanding of recent accomplishments, upcoming milestones, and long-term goals with Tribes and urban Indian organizations across Indian Country. Major updates communicated to T/UIO partners during 2024 TC/UC sessions are as follows:

- Launch of Focus Groups
- PATH EHR Branding Announcement
- Launch of the Getting Ready to Get Ready Guide
- Premier of Videos 1 and 2 of the Modernization Video Series: [Modernization Program Leadership Testimonials](#) and [The Impact of PATH EHR](#)
- ECG Current State and Selected Domain Group Chairs
- *Buy & Build* Phase Activities



## 2024 Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer Recap Report Health Information Technology Modernization Program

- Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Program Funding Update
- Initial Pilot Site Visit Recap

Each TC/UC session featured a modernization-focused topic presented by Program leadership and subject matter experts (SME). These featured topics provided details about future implementation efforts for T/UIO partners to consider and share more broadly within their organizations. The table below details the key takeaways from each TC/UC session in 2024.

Session Date	Modernization Topic	Key Information Shared
Feb. 8, 2024	Enterprise Collaboration Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enterprise Collaboration Group (ECG) overview and purpose</li> <li>▪ ECG participation considerations</li> <li>▪ ECG scope of work for PATH EHR configuration</li> <li>▪ ECG governance structure and responsibilities</li> <li>▪ Announcement of 15 ECG Domain Groups</li> <li>▪ ECG recruitment among Statement of Interest (SOI) participants</li> </ul>
May 9, 2024	Deployment and Cohort Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launch of the <a href="#">Getting Ready to Get Ready Guide</a></li> <li>▪ Overview of the 11 key actions to begin preparations for organizational readiness</li> <li>▪ Differentiation between the terminology “pilot site” and “cohort”</li> <li>▪ Summary of the implementation pathway for the pilot site and iterative cohorts</li> <li>▪ Plans for the identification of cohort selection criteria</li> <li>▪ Introduction to Change Advocates</li> </ul>



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Session Date	Modernization Topic	Key Information Shared
Aug. 8, 2024	Multi-Tenant Domain Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key features and capabilities of PATH EHR</li> <li>▪ Overview of a multi-tenant EHR environment and the implications of utilizing a single patient record</li> <li>▪ Patient privacy and data security measures included in a shared EHR environment</li> <li>▪ Considerations for implementing role-based access within PATH EHR</li> </ul>
Nov. 7, 2024	Site Readiness and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organizational readiness approach and integration between people, processes, and technology at the site level</li> <li>▪ Importance of current state optimization at facilities prior to site readiness activities</li> <li>▪ Overview of the comprehensive training approach and details about the four types of training that the IHS will offer</li> <li>▪ Representative learner journey exemplifying the various training modules available for site-level staff</li> </ul>

More information about the modernization topics featured in 2024 TC/UC sessions can be found in the presentation decks on the Health IT Modernization Resource Hub [here](#).

### **SUMMARY OF OPEN DIALOGUE WITH TRIBAL AND URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATION PARTNERS**

As a key component of each TC/UC, the open dialogue segment provides an opportunity for T/UIO leaders and representatives to engage in a robust discussion with Program leadership about the modernization-focused topics featured during the session. The Program dedicates approximately 40 minutes of each session to open dialogue, ensuring the continuation of close partnership with Tribes and urban Indian organizations in anticipation of PATH EHR implementation. Before the start of each open dialogue, Program leadership posed three consultation and confer questions for T/UIO attendees to guide conversation and encourage reflection on the topics presented.



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The list below captures the prevailing themes gleaned from the questions and input provided by T/UIO partners during the four open dialogue segments in 2024:

- PATH EHR Benefits and Capabilities
- Interoperability and Data Management
- Implementation Timeline
- Cohort Selection Process
- PATH EHR Financial Implications
- Pilot Site and Cohort Considerations
- ECG Purpose and Responsibilities
- Role-based Access and Security Measures
- Pilot Site Deployment
- Site Readiness at Tribal and Urban Indian Organization Facilities
- End User Training Expectations

### NEXT STEPS FOR THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

The IHS has identified immediate action items for ensuring long-term collaboration with T/UIO leaders and representatives following conclusion of the 204 TC/UC sessions:

- Leverage input gathered from T/UIO leaders and representatives to inform the facilitation of future TC/UC sessions
- Document and maintain frequently asked questions from T/UIO TC/UC attendees for incorporation in Program resources

### 2024 TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND URBAN CONFER ATTENDEE DATA

Based on the information provided through the registration process and attendee data, there were a total of **363 T/UIO leaders and representatives in attendance** across the 2024 TC/UC sessions. The table below shows attendance per session.

TC/UC Session Date	Number of Tribal Attendees	Number of UIO Attendees
Feb. 14, 2024	86	19
May 9, 2024	67	23
Aug. 8, 2024	69	14
Nov. 7, 2024	62	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>79</b>

Based on the results of the TC/UC Satisfaction Survey deployed at the conclusion of each session, the **overall satisfaction rating** for 2024 TC/UC sessions among T/UIO attendees was **91%**.



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### UPCOMING ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRIBES AND URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS

During the 2024 TC/UC sessions, leadership encouraged T/UIO partners to continue their engagement with ongoing modernization activities and the Program as a whole. Tribes and urban Indian organizations can leverage the resources below to continue collaborating with the IHS on PATH EHR.

- Complete the [Health IT Modernization Awareness Survey](#)
- Provide a [Statement of Interest](#)
- Participate in Focus Groups
- Reach out to [Modernization@IHS.gov](mailto:Modernization@IHS.gov) with questions and comments
- Follow the IHS on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#)
- Attend 2025 TC/UC sessions (*dates and topics forthcoming*)